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# **MAWTS-1 PRESENTATION COOKBOOK**

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**UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS**  
Marine Aviation and Weapons Tactics Squadron One  
Box 99200  
Yuma Arizona 85369-9200

1. A large part of the Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course (WTI) is geared towards preparing you to execute the Weapons and Tactics Training Program (WTP) at your parent unit. Learning the intricacies of aviation planning, tactics, and threat systems will consume the bulk of your time at the course, but we also endeavor to prepare you to be an effective instructor while you are a Prospective WTI.
2. This "Cookbook" is the first installment in a multi-tiered program of instruction designed to enhance your abilities as an instructor. The cookbook is laid out in a simple format in order to take you systematically through the preparation and delivery phases of any presentation. In the short term, it will prepare you for your student presentations, flight briefs, and mission briefs during the WTI course. In the long term, it will provide a ready reference for any time you are preparing to give a class from the Academic Support Package (ASP) (or any formal lecture, class or presentation).
3. During the generic academics phase of WTI you will also receive an Instructional Techniques class that will illustrate many of the points brought out in this guide. If you have problems or questions about anything related to public speaking ask them at that time. The WTI program will not make you a master lecturer, but it will give you the basic tools to accomplish your mission as a WTI.
4. With regard to student presentations, each Department has slightly varying policy and objectives, so please contact your appropriate Division Head for details.
5. POC for this document is Maj. J.M. Hackett, Assistant Operations Officer, DSN 269-3591/5303.

## **STUDENT PRESENTATION COOKBOOK**

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## **I. Research and Develop**

### **STEP A: Analyze your mission**

#### **Defining parameters or "boxing-in" the mission**

Even before you choose a topic for your presentation, you must determine the scope and intent of your period of instruction. There are three primary factors to consider in this regard: 1) The audience (Who are you giving the presentation to?); 2) The Material you are going to present (What?); and 3) Selecting a method of presentation (How?).

Consider a situation where you as a new WTI are tasked by your CO to provide a period of instruction for your squadron. In this case, the occasion and audience are a given. Unfortunately, the audience will be a tough one--not because they will walk out, fall asleep or be openly critical, but because they are your peers. You will realize that your professional reputation, for years to come, will ride on **every word you say** during this presentation. While this is a slight exaggeration, it is part of the self-induced stress felt by many instructors. However, those who focus on the stress are guilty of concentrating on the audience and not on the material--a common pitfall discussed later.

An instructional period can take on many forms from a free-flowing discussion format to a formal military brief, if that is what you are most comfortable and experienced with. Military briefs are rather formal and conform to several basic guidelines. The Joint Staff Officers Guide, AFSC Pub 1, chapter three, outlines the different type of military briefs that are given. The bottom line is this: choose a format you are comfortable with and that is appropriate for your target audience.

### **STEP B: Consider your audience**

#### **1. Gauging the Audience**

Analyzing your audience is one of the first and most fundamental aspects of preparing an effective presentation. As a squadron WTI at the unit level, the task is usually relatively simple. In terms of rank, experience, age, attitudes, etc. your audience is relatively homogeneous. It is important to stress the similarities in your audience and minimize the differences. Present problems and draw conclusions that will be easy to understand by all. In other forums, gauging the audience will not be as easy. If it is possible to choose or limit your audience to "fit" your topic and level of complexity, do so. Do not assume the level of detail or complexity your audience is capable of retaining. Ask questions and gauge their body language (i.e. rolling eyes, snoring, and chuckles after each acronym, etc.). Most importantly, keep your audience in mind as you prepare during the research phase.

Questions you should ask yourself about your audience:

1. How much do they know about the subject?
2. Does each individual in the audience know as much as everybody else?
3. Will they be interested in the subject?
4. What is their level of understanding?
5. Are there reasons why they should be interested?
6. Do they have preconceived attitudes about the subject?

## **2. "Playing" the Audience**

Just as considering your audience is important before the presentation, so is reacting to the attitude of your audience during the delivery. Several techniques and good rules of thumb in dealing with your audience are listed below:

- Never open apologetically such as "I know you do not want to be here..." or "This is boring stuff but..." Few can rebound after a dismal opening like that.
- Avoid behaving in a conceited or antagonistic manner.
- Demonstrate a genuine concern for your listeners and exhibit a friendly attitude to relax yourself and your audience.
- Emphasize similarities between your listeners and you.
- Be honest and straightforward. Do not attempt to talk to a level or use words beyond your capability.
- Use humor that is in good taste. It is inappropriate for a Marine to use jokes that degrade or humiliate.
- Reference opinions of people held in high regard by the audience.
- Demonstrate that you are an expert and have done your homework.
- Are there taboo subjects, phrases or words that will offend your audience?
- Establish with the audience a connection between your topic and their needs.
- Seek to maximize the impact of your delivery (covered in detail later).
- Take only as much time as needed to cover the required material to the appropriate level of detail – don't lecture to hear yourself talk or to fill time.

## **STEP C: Consider your own strengths and weaknesses**

Be introspective during this step. Examine your own mental and emotional processes. Honestly assess your strengths and weaknesses. Play upon your strengths and minimize or disguise your weaknesses.

Use a style of speaking that is your own. "Selecting" a style is somewhat misleading; the term infers that you will choose something other than your natural mannerisms and attitude. Speaking styles are developed with time and practice. A helpful technique is to analyze every speaker you listen to, especially ones that you admire or that particularly impress you. Break down a successful speaker's style into quantifiable qualities (e.g. Dynamic, good sense of humor, physically imposing, etc.). If a speaker is poor, try and capture those elements that make him so (e.g. monotone, scratches himself continuously, poor subject matter knowledge). You will gradually build a database of do's and don'ts for yourself that can then be applied as you develop your own speaking style. You must not attempt to stylize your lecture with behavior that does not come naturally. If you are a dry, humorless sort, do not attempt to imitate the squadron or battalion clown. Lastly, experiment. Don't be afraid to try new techniques, or to present subject matter in a new or unique manner.

Consult your peers for frank (honest and open vs. those views expressed by Frank Stallone) opinions. Chances are that only your peer group equals will honestly tell you that you slouch, use the word "utilize" too often, or frequently "check" certain body parts when you speak. Your subordinates and seniors may be overly kind, and your spouse may be blind to many of your speaking faults.

Do not despair if you feel that you not a natural born or particularly effective speaker. With very few exceptions, great speakers are developed, not born. Two of the greatest speakers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Winston Churchill and Teddy Roosevelt were shy, stammering, and generally weak as youths. Both of these men recognized the importance of effective communication skills and developed themselves by strengthening their weaknesses and capitalizing on their strengths.

## **STEP D: Choose a topic**

### **Choosing a topic**

Before beginning the research, ensure that your topic is an acceptable one. Bounce it off your peers at your battalion or squadron. Think about it: would you want to sit through a six-hour class on it? Six hours is mentioned because, if you are the average person, that is how much time you will spend preparing your presentation. If your topic does not excite you now, it will surely bore you (and your audience) by the time you are ready to deliver your presentation on it.

**Objectives:** The general and specific responses you expect from your presentation are significant. General responses can be an audience understanding your topic or a change in beliefs, attitude and behavior. A presentation with more modest goals can seek to amuse, divert or entertain. You should identify the desired responses before collecting sources or conducting research. Examples of specific responses are: understanding that detailed objective area planning must be accomplished prior to en route planning; assimilating the lessons learned from a particular operation or an individual's personal experiences; or dedicating oneself to the streamlining of radio procedures. When you begin to prepare your material, determine your primary motive:

- To interest or amuse the audience.
- To inform or teach the audience.
- To stimulate or impress the audience.
- To convince or persuade the audience.

**Bottom line:** Select a subject that suits your abilities and experience and those of your audience. Ensure the content is appropriate for the occasion, audience, and the time allotted.

## **STEP E: Collect sources**

### **Collection of sources**

The first step in researching an oral presentation is an inventory of all the personal knowledge you have on the subject. A self-inventory may suggest a tentative organization but, even more important, it will point out gaps in knowledge where you need to do further research.

**Experts:** You may want to consult with recognized experts in the subject you are about to cover. Even if they are not bona fide experts, getting their opinions/perceptions concerning your topic will give you a perspective you might not have considered, but which your audience may have. Others will assist you in narrowing your search by directing you to published references.

**Electronic Sources:** Extranets (Internet) and Intranets (SIPRNET) can provide a wealth of resource material. Since the SIPRNET is a secure DoD network with controlled access, one can have a fairly high level of confidence in the reference sources found there. Because the Internet exists in the public domain, there are no guarantees on the validity of information found there. When using information found on "the Web" you must verify the validity of that information. You can validate information by contacting the site host directly or through comparative research at unrelated Web sites or other published material. Some on-line material can be taken at face value if it



comes from a “trusted agent”. Trusted agents might include established news sources (e.g. CNN, The Wall Street Journal) or other generally recognized subject matter experts (e.g. Jane’s On Line, Encyclopedia Britannica). If you are unable to validate the content of the information, it shouldn’t be used. If you absolutely must use that material to make a point, you should preface the material with a disclaimer.

There are two basic sources for information – primary and secondary. If you get your data second hand--from someone's report in the Marine Corps Gazette, Talon, Newsweek, etc.--you are using a secondary source. If you get your information directly from doctrine, technical manuals or CMC/joint policy you are using a primary source. There are several advantages to using primary source material: reliability, timeliness and adaptability. Primary sources are accepted, current, authoritative, and are not arguable (to the extent that someone has at least signed off on it). In any case, come to your own conclusions. Evaluate the issues from your own point of view.

## **STEP F: Decide the level of classification**

### **Classification**

The overall classification of a presentation depends on the content of the individual elements, and must be classified at the level corresponding to the highest classification of all material contained within (i.e. an unclassified brief with one Secret slide becomes Secret).

When gathering research material and constructing a presentation, consideration must be given to the appropriate level of classification. These considerations must include the makeup of the anticipated audience (e.g. don’t put SECRET/NOFORN material in a presentation to an audience of mixed nationality), the level of detail required for the presentation, the availability of secure machines and materials to prepare and present your lecture, and secure facilities in which to present your class.

A classified presentation carries with it the responsibility that is associated with the handling of any classified material. When not in use, the courseware must be stored in a designated CMCC or secondary control point. The audience must be advised of the classification level of the presentation. All notes taken by your audience will require appropriate handling and storage. Special consideration must be given to where you give your presentation, both for rehearsals and for the actual lecture.

## **STEP G: Establish a preparation timeline**

**Establishing a time-line:** Establishing dedicated preparation time is essential. Determine whether you require an hour of prep for the entire presentation or an hour of prep for each minute "on stage".

- Prepare a realistic timeline.

a. Preparation Timeline Considerations

- Research
- Courseware Preparation
- Rehearsal

b. Delivery Timeline – Presentation Duration

*Target Presentation Length + Question & Answer Time = Total Period of Instruction*

- Stick to the schedule you have created. When creating your timeline, plan back from the objective area (presentation). Your research and preparation time must be balanced against the need to actually build and rehearse the final product. For your presentation, rehearsal is important not only to increase your comfort with the subject material and improve your delivery, but also to work on timing. Lastly, time should be allotted at the end of any instructional period for questions. This time should be planned in – exceeding your allotted time is unprofessional and unnecessary.

## **STEP H: Conduct research**

Research entails much more than simply reading material on your subject. You must **pare down** the material, organize it, and eventually verbalize it. The paring down of material is simply establishing a focus. To do this you must:

- Isolate a single premise.
- Turn your research needs into precise questions.
- Determine what kind of answers you need.
- Prepare a work file.
- Take notes, maintain them logically.
- Segment the material.

The last step, segmenting your material, involves determining a format and preparing an outline. The format should generally consist of three main parts: an **Introduction**, a **Body** and a **Conclusion**. The outline is discussed in the next step. Your format should follow these basic principles:

- (1) Start by arousing your audience's interest.
- (2) State the title.
- (3) State your basic premise or purpose and how the audience will benefit.

(4) List the major issues to be covered.

(5) Bulletize/minimize the sub-issues.

(6) Conclude with initial premise.

(7) Review.

Remember: George Washington presented his inaugural address, the most memorable in U.S. history, in only 138 words. Mark Twain recommended a strong introduction, a strong conclusion, and having them as close together as possible.

### **STEP I: Prepare an outline**

In preparing an outline of your material, simpler is better. If the standard outline seen in military documents or used in high school or college for term papers is the easiest for you, then use them. The following is one example.

1. Title and Premise

2. Main Idea X

A. Supporting idea

B. Supporting idea

C. Supporting idea

3. Main Idea Y

A. Supporting idea

B. Supporting idea

C. Supporting idea

4. Main Idea Z

A. Supporting idea

B. Supporting idea

C. Supporting idea

5. Conclusion

A. Supporting idea X

B. Supporting idea Y

C. Supporting idea Z

} *Tied to main points, drive home your main lessons and clean up any loose ends.*

6. Summary

7. Questions

**Storyboarding** is another means of helping you visualize your flow. Walt Disney created all of his full-length feature cartoons by storyboarding his material. A white board, butcher-block paper or large note cards can aid in this process. It simply involves listing your main topics/ideas on top and all pertinent material pertaining to each point below. Step back, avoid concentrating on the material, and consider the flow. Does one point logically lead to the next? Does the arrangement have a strategy (as outlined in Step K)? This method will help you work on your transitions as you move from point to point, issue to issue. Whatever format you choose, you must be able to visualize the whole of your presentation at a glance. By doing so it you will flow more naturally and you will not be as intimidated by the massive quantity of information you are about to relay. Two tools you can use when formatting the introduction and body are the acronyms INTROSH and PREP.

**INTROSH** (Interest/Need/Title/Revision/Objectives/Scope/Handouts) is a useful tool in developing an introduction.

Interest - Build the audience's interest.

Need - Establish the need for your audience to receive your lecture (Why is it important to them?).

Title - State the title.

Revision - List or identify if there are any revisions.

Objectives - State the objectives of your lecture.

Scope/Approach - List the scope or the approach you plan to use for your lecture.

Handouts/Notes - Are there any? When should you pass them out?

**PREP** (Point/Reason/Example/Point) can be a useful tool in developing the body of the presentation.

Point - State the idea

Reason - Why are you discussing this topic, and why it's relevant.

Example - Illustrate the point with an appropriate example

Point - Restate the main idea again.

**STEP J: Plan for use of visual aids**

## **1. The use of visual aids**

Visual training aids are extremely important and, if used properly, enable your audience to remember what you have said. Unfortunately, during the student presentations, many use visual aids as a crutch or visual cue rather than to burn an image into the mind of the audience. Visual aids should conform to one or more of the following criteria. They should:

- Show how things look (as in photos).
- Show how things work (as in diagrams or models).
- Show how things relate to each other (as in the infamous C3 wire diagram/flow chart).
- Show important information such as key words or key numbers.
- Convey humor, but not to the extent that it becomes a distraction.

If you have simply listed all of the points of your lecture on transparencies so that you cover everything and "fill the time requirement" you have missed the point. By overloading your audience, you dilute the effectiveness of your visual aid. Pictures are worth a thousand words, but do not try to capture a thousand words in one picture.

## **2. Designing your visual aids**

The most commonly used visual aid format for the purpose of public presentation is the slide show. The DoD and USMC standard software application for presentations is Microsoft PowerPoint, but you should not feel constrained to limit yourself exclusively to that product or the slide show format. Other visual aid mediums include but are not limited to video, whiteboard, acetate overheads, photo slides, audiotape, and butcher-block paper. Your visual aids should be selected to enhance your presentation and present information. When designing visual aids there are 13 essential issues to consider:

- (1) Use simple terms, relationships, font, and graphics.
- (2) If a visual aid does not explain something better than words, do not use it.
- (3) A visual aid should never exceed 25 characters across (counting spaces).
- (4) It should have the fewest number of lines possible (usually no more than eight).
- (5) Only show the highlights.

(6) Conserve words on your visual aids. Use only key words or phrases rather than a whole sentence. Use your judgment though—if a full sentence provides clarity or emphasizes a point, then use the full sentence.

(7) Cover only one idea per visual aid, and do not dwell on it for more than a few minutes.

(8) On graphs, use a minimum number of curves, never exceeding three.

(9) Use a minimum number of grid lines.

(10) Eliminate supplementary notes.

(11) Omit subtitles.

(12) Avoid using vertical printing.

(13) A visual aid for a presentation should contain far less information than an illustration for a report or handout.

## **II. Rehearsal**

### **STEP K: Organize Your Materials**

Before stepping into your rehearsal you must take the time to organize your material and presentation into a logical manner. Developing presentation flow patterns will not only help the audience understand your material, but will aid your familiarity with the material. Patterns for the class can follow one of several strategies:

Time - Sequential organization is most appropriate for "how to" classes. Walk the audience through the logical steps. (This Cookbook is an example).

Space - A top to bottom approach. Best suited to technical classes, i.e. *The Stinger Missile*: start at the seeker head and end with the launch motor; *The MAWTS-1 Building*: start with the security window and end with the ready rooms, etc.

Cause and Effect - You can use one of two strategies. The first is a listing of certain conditions and contend that these will produce a given result or effect. The second strategy is the inverse of the first. You start with an effect and follow it up with the causes and conditions that drive it. This can be done with classes such as MACCS Casualty Planning, Reactive Weaponing and so on.

Problem and Solution - Extremely effective when discussing your point of view or personal answers to common problems. You must be able to prove that your solutions are practical, realistic and desirable. This method is most effective when conducting a decision brief.

Pro and Con - Another effective strategy for decision briefs is the Pro and Con Technique. The instructor impartially itemizes the advantages and disadvantages of a certain course of action. Sometimes the instructor can manipulate the audience into drawing conclusions on the subject. The order in which you present the pros and cons should depend on which you feel more strongly about; finish with the stronger portion.

Topical - A topical division of the main points of a talk involves determining categories of the subject. For example, The Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) consists of Ground Combat Element (GCE), Aviation Combat Element (ACE), Combat Service Support Element (CSSE), Command Element (CE). This description would aid audience understanding of all MAGTF organization.

These strategies can either be combined or employed singularly. Each category whether it is pro/con, topical or otherwise should be broken down into supporting notes. These notes should be transcribed onto a medium to be used during your rehearsal, and as a backup for your presentation. Notes can be placed on 3X5" or 5X8" index cards, a half or quarter folded sheet of paper, or in the form of speaker notes which can be printed with the slide they pertain to or embedded within the slide show. Annotated on the note medium can be bullets to trigger thoughts or narratives to read. You may use notes for cueing, but don't rely on them to the point that they become a crutch and a distraction to the audience. Only use working notes for rehearsals and, when absolutely required, for reference during the actual class.

### **STEP M: Approximate memorization**

A simple and effective method for memorizing your material is approximate memorization—approximate in that only a portion of the information needs to be committed to memory. If the main points are covered and the material is well researched, the fillers (related quotes, sub-issues, etc.) come naturally. This also allows flexibility for the instructor. If approximate memorization is used and the audience seems responsive only to certain elements, then the instructor can cull the information, expand on portions of it and avoid others. However, this requires the instructor to "think on his feet".

### **Danger of verbatim memorization**

Verbatim memorization is optimal for the extremely nervous and forgetful lecturer. By memorizing word for word instead of point by point, you ensure all the planned material is covered. The danger in this is that the speaker becomes detached from the audience. In effect, the presentation becomes a canned recital and will often appear as such to the audience. Another problem with memorizing material word by word is brief mental lapses. If one forgets even a single word in a memorized speech, it may disrupt his/her thought process and cause an unacceptable pause. By contrast, when a

speaker uses approximate memorization and misses an issue or subtopic the incident will most likely go unnoticed by all but the speaker.

### **STEP N: Reduce your material**

The "half rule" is a strategy for writing term papers and may help you in creating an effective brief. Simply put, the half rule is culling down your material by half before you begin your final rehearsals. For a 15-minute presentation, prepare 1/2 hour's worth of material and reduce it to the most essential, entertaining, effective issues. Having an impartial and honest opinion from someone while you rehearse will assist you in determining which points are unnecessary. Avoid slanted reasoning and irrational appeals. Examples of slanted reasoning include:

- Hasty or rash generalizations.
- Faulty dilemmas and analogies.
- Stacked or unsupportable evidence.

Irrational appeals depend upon blind transfer of feelings from one thing to another without logical thought. This area could include:

- Name-calling or putting people or things in a bad light by using uncomplimentary terms.
- Glittering compliments, praise and generalities.
- Appeals for the audience to get on the bandwagon.
- The superior approach, "browbeating" or intimidating the audience with superior experience, information or qualities.
- The "plain folks" approach uses emotion vice reasoning or logic for its base. An example could be "Hey, I'm just a student too. I'm just here to get through this".

### **STEP K: Rehearsal**

Rehearsal is essential for many reasons, the most important of which are:

1. To gain enough familiarity so that the right words come out effortlessly and naturally
2. To allow easy use of visuals
3. To look and feel more comfortable



4. To stay on track and finish on time
5. To make it easier for you to answer questions and anticipate them
6. Rehearsal may expose some gaps in your information or flaws in your logic

### **STEP O: Practice session with a designated listener**

Practice your brief in front of someone, preferably a peer. A peer should give you an honest appraisal. A subordinate, senior or family member may try to avoid offending you. The more blunt and tactless your practice audience, the better your presentation will become. Video taping the rehearsal for self-analysis is an effective method of appraising your delivery.

## **III. Delivery**

### **STEP P: The classroom**

#### **Classroom Preparation**

1. In addition to preparing teaching material, the instructor has the responsibility for preparing the teaching environment. This does not necessarily mean that the instructor has to erect chalkboards, hang projection screens, or move furniture, although on occasions this may be the case. What it does mean is that the instructor is responsible for ensuring that the teaching environment is conducive to learning. Arrange the furniture so it is appropriate for the method of instruction and ensure the training aids are serviceable and properly set up.

a. **The environment:** The instructor should try to control the physical environment so that it is conducive to learning. The following factors are important:

- 1) **Lighting:** Lighting should be adequate for the activity that is taking place. If students are expected to read or write, then lighting must be bright. If possible avoid fluorescent light rated "warm white" - "cool white" is best. Ideally, lighting should be controllable from a single point accessible to the instructor.
- 2) **Heating:** The standard temperature range for a sedentary working environment is 68-74 degrees. If the room is too warm, the students (and possibly the instructor) will become lethargic. If the room is too cold, the students will be more concerned with keeping warm than concentrating on the instruction. The actual temperature of the environment will depend on the physical activity of the students and the nature of the tasks performed. For

example, practical workshop activities require the student to remain warm enough to retain tactical sensitivity without leading to excessive sweating.

- 3) Ventilation: Inadequate ventilation will cause the environment to become heavy, causing lapses in concentration or dozing. The rate at which fresh air is required may vary with the time of day. The phenomenon known as "the post-lunch dip" or "the death hour" occurs in the early afternoon and is the time of day when students tend to become sleepy. This "sleepy" period, which usually lasts for about 1 hour, is not always dependent on the consumption of food or drink, though this is usually the cause. During this period, an increase in the supply of fresh air will help to prevent your audience from slipping into a low-grade narcolepsy.
  - 4) Distractions: Visual aids that are not immediately relevant can distract students; remove these visual aids from sight when not in use. Confine pictures, posters and diagrams to walls that are not directly visible to the student during the session. External distractions, generated by sources not under the control of the instructor, are more difficult to minimize. An active and interesting learning environment will help to reduce the effect of external distractions. Where outside distractions are particularly strong, consider using curtains or blinds.
  - 5) Décor: Harsh colors are unsettling and drab colors are boring. The best colors for classrooms are light pastel shades, preferably matte finish to reduce glare.
  - 6) Acoustics: A room with poor acoustics is tiring to teach in and irritating to students. Curtains and carpets can help to dampen noise and produce better acoustics. You should QA the acoustics of your classroom environment prior to delivering your period of instruction. During the QA, have a peer evaluate the audio portions of your brief. Some things to check for:
    - Can you be heard from all areas of the classroom?
    - Does your voice carry well, or does it become garbled or distorted, does it echo?
    - If you are using a microphone, does it work? How high is the volume set? Do you get feedback?
    - If your presentation includes sound bites or video, ensure that the computer volume is adequate and clear and plays smoothly. If not, consider removing the sounds from the presentation so they don't become a distraction.
- b. Seating: Comfortable seating for the student is desirable in that it reduces lapses in concentration. However, large soft armchairs are not suitable as they encourage nodding off. If you require students to take notes then provide a suitable writing surface. Seating layout is matter of method, class size, room shape and type of activity. The most important criterion is that the instructor is

able to see all of the students from his normal area of operation and that the students can see and hear the instructor and all training aids. Another important consideration is that of personal space. Adults in particular do not like being crammed into a classroom; ideally each seated student (without a desk) should have a minimum personal space of nine square feet (3 x 3). Where the instruction involves physical activity, then naturally the space requirements will increase (often due to safety considerations).

## **STEP Q: Body language and other physical factors**

One can usually tell a good presentation from a bad one even if you cannot hear it. A speaker who is "bombing" typically shows it with gestures, posture and eye contact. By adhering to the following guidelines, you will ensure that your body language contributes to, rather than detracts from, your presentation.

**Appearance:** First impressions *DO* count - an audience sees you before they listen to you. The audience evaluates your uniform, haircut and shave--consciously and subconsciously--before you speak. As a Marine, you should always be aware of your appearance. As a speaker, you must be particularly aware of how you appear. Be aware that attitude can also affect your appearance. A nervous, fidgety person will sound alarm bells in the minds of the audience that you are uncomfortable. In the worst case, they will then assume that you will not put on a first-rate presentation. Remain outwardly calm; make the butterflies fly in formation.

**Body Movement:** Effective body movement engages the audience as you speak. Use body language to accentuate, clarify, punctuate and illustrate. Although you are in the military, avoid the "modified position of attention": feet together (feet 45 degree angle), one arm at side, one bent at the elbow, and all that moves is your head (barely). Good movement will not only put you at ease but your audience as well.

If you use a prop such as a pen, pointer, or yardstick be particularly careful not to menace your audience with it. Do not point it directly at someone or wave it close to anyone. Use a prop for what it is intended: to point out a portion of your visual aid or to make a particular point more meaningful and memorable. Folding your arms or placing your hands on your hips is acceptable, but placing your hands in your pockets is unacceptable. For a more informal feel, sit on the edge of a table, lean on a podium or over someone's desk. Body movement can, and may, be required to re-engage the audience. If someone is dozing, whispering, or obviously not paying attention, get physically close to that person, then lean or gesture toward him or her. As you this, avoid being threatening.

Use of your "stage space" will vary greatly depending on your speaking style, presentation content, audience, "stage" area, and level of comfort. Use of a lectern may be a necessity based on the audio/visual systems available to you. Try and avoid rapid, nervous movements like pacing. There is nothing wrong with moving around the stage – it helps keep your audience's attention and can assist you in making your presentation more dynamic and animated.

Famous record producer Bruce Dickenson encouraged his performers to “explore the space – really, explore the space.” An instructor who effectively uses stage space will undoubtedly be wearing gold-plated diapers.

**Use of the Voice:** A good voice has three important characteristics. Dr. John A. Kline of Air University refers to these characteristics as quality, intelligibility and variety. When these qualities are properly developed they make the speaker’s voice reasonably pleasant, easy to understand and able to express differences in meaning.

**Quality:** Quality is the hardest aspect of your voice to control. If you consider your voice extremely irritating, you have the ability to retrain it. A good reference for altering characteristics of your voice is The Art of Speaking Made Simple by William R. Goudin and Edward W. Mammen, Doubleday Books, 1981.

**Intelligibility:** Articulation, pronunciation, vocalization and choice of words affect the clarity of your speech. Speak carefully; avoid poor grammar and stock expressions such as “OK”, “like”, “you know”, “all right”, etc.

**Variety:** You must be conscious to avoid a monotone delivery. Speaking 100 to 180 words per minute is the norm, but you should vary that considerably to stress particularly lucid points. Change your pitch to be emphatic, illustrative or humorous, but be careful not to exaggerate lest the variety lose its effectiveness.

## **STEP R: Using visual aids**

Visual aids should stimulate the visual sense in an effort enhance learning. “I see and remember, I hear and forget.” Remember, the presentation is *NOT* the goal or the endstate, but a means of conveying information. Don’t lose function for form – your audience is not evaluating your ability on the computer, they are trying to assimilate and retain the information you are presenting. Some points to keep in mind about the major forms of media available for delivery of presentation visuals are as follows:

### **a. PowerPoint.**

#### **Advantages:**

- Flexible and universal within DoD and most civilian organizations
- Portable (can be contained on a disk or laptop)
- Easy to Use
- Maximum visual impact (multimedia)
- Allows for a wide variety of formats for information presentation
- Allows for editing and changes to be incorporated instantly up until the time of presentation delivery, enhancing the timeliness of the material.

#### **Disadvantages:**

- Can be extremely time consuming to develop
- Reduces eye contact

- Vulnerable to power outages or hardware failure

**Points to Remember:**

- PowerPoint works for you, not the other way around!
- Limit the number of information contained on each slide to prevent overload
- Organize and edit to limit the effects of “Death by PowerPoint”
- Don’t use PowerPoint as a crutch for poor preparation
- QA your slides. If you are using an ASP class, tailor the slides to meet your individual needs.
- Work on your transitions between slides to avoid the necessity to read each slide

**b. Whiteboard. Leave the board as you expect to find it - CLEAN.**

**Advantages:**

- Relatively inexpensive
- Reliable
- Easy to use
- Flexible (notepad, conceal/reveal)

**Disadvantages:**

- Messy
- Slow to use
- Reduces eye-contact
- Color limitations
- Definition limitations
- Limited space
- Accidental erasure

**Boardwork:** Consider writing, color, impact and eye contact.

**Points to remember:**

- Clean surfaces before and after use
- Plan all your work before hand
- Have your equipment ready before you start
- Pre-prepared work should remain hidden until required
- Write legibly

**b. The Overhead Projector (OHP)**

**1. Techniques**

- Ensure transparencies are in the correct sequence
- Ensure proper alignment of slides on projector
- Use exposure sheets or flaps
- Face the class
- Use pointers with care

## **2. Advantages of OHP**

- Pre-prepared visuals
- Easy storage
- Maximum eye-contact
- Speeds presentation
- Visual impact
- Works well in normal room lighting
- Cleaner than chalk

## **3. Things to remember**

- Focus!
- Picture size should be appropriate
- Account for the Keystone effect
- Consider audience visibility
- Quality of graphics and readability of type/font

## **STEP S: Minimizing nervousness**

Nervousness can have a positive as well as negative impact on your presentation. Nerves or adrenaline will heighten your sense of awareness and mental acuity. Nerves can also cause you to fold in front of an audience, and most people become as anxious and uncomfortable as the speaker does.

### **Tips for the Terminally Nervous**

- If you are one who gets nervous before a presentation, remember that you are not alone. Keep things in perspective; optimism pays dividends.
- Be well prepared. The more times you practice your presentation, particularly in front of others, the more you will realize that the presentation is just another iteration of what you have become used to in your rehearsals. Even seasoned lecturers get nervous if they try to “wing it”.
- Concentrate on what you have to say.
- Enthusiasm is the key. Your enthusiasm will engage the audience.
- Nail your introduction. The first portion of any presentation is the most difficult. Memorize and rehearse your intro. Once you get over the first 3-5 minutes and into your rhythm the rest of your presentation will normally go well.
- Begin slowly. If anything is to be memorized it should be your opening line.
- Prepare yourself physically. Get a good night's sleep the night prior to, and a good meal the day of, your presentation. Stretch your muscles, crack your

knuckles, and control your breathing just as you would before a ballgame or PFT. Some prefer to "pump-up" by pacing and talking to themselves.

- Visualize a successful performance. Great speakers as well as great athletes use visualization in preparation. As you do your final mental run through, picture a responsive audience. See yourself in front of the audience saying all the right things.
- Conduct a rehearsed warm-up just prior to going on stage that includes speaking aloud emphasizing your introduction. This will warm up your voice and mentally prepare you to go on stage with enthusiasm and force.

#### IV. Summary

This handout is by no means the answer. Its purpose is to provide a method for you to use to achieve the required level of professionalism for your presentation. Something to remember is that **Preparation** establishes **Topic and Content Relevance**, **Personal Knowledge**, and **Confidence**. The bottom line is that the quality of your presentation is directly dependent on how badly you want to do it right. Just knowing the information or plan is only a part of a successfully executed plan or operation. Conveying that information is where successful execution starts. A mediocre plan enthusiastically and professionally briefed is more likely to succeed than an excellent plan presented without confidence, clarity, or conviction.